



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**Executive Office of Health and Human Services**  
**Division of Medical Assistance**  
600 Washington Street  
Boston, MA 02111  
[www.mass.gov/dma](http://www.mass.gov/dma)

Eligibility Operations Memo 03-15  
December 1, 2003

TO: MassHealth Eligibility Operations Staff

FROM: Russ Kulp, Assistant Commissioner, Member Services

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Russ Kulp", followed by a horizontal line.

RE: Healthy Start Program

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### **Introduction**

Effective October 1, 2003, the Division assumed responsibility for the Healthy Start Program (HSP) from the Department of Public Health. Effective October 15, 2003, individuals applying for HSP will use only the Medical Benefit Request (MBR) form to apply for this program.

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### **Changes**

In July 2003, the Department of Public Health (DPH) made several changes to the eligibility requirements of the HSP. These changes were made to mirror the eligibility requirements of the MassHealth Limited program.

- The HSP income level was modified from 225% to **200% of the federal poverty level.**
- Retroactive coverage has been changed from 30 days to **10 days.**
- The monthly household income before taxes and deductions for every family member will be used to determine eligibility.
- The MassHealth definition of family/household will be used to determine household size.

As part of these changes, HSP is now part of Massachusetts's SCHIP (State Children's Health Insurance Program), and is eligible to receive 65 percent FFP.

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**Eligibility**

Whenever a pregnant woman completes an MBR, her eligibility is determined for the most comprehensive benefit available. If the woman is not eligible for Standard coverage due to her immigration status, she will receive MassHealth Limited coverage.

Whenever a pregnant woman becomes eligible for MassHealth Limited, her information is sent via a tape match to UNICARE, the vendor contracted to provide the HSP benefit package. UNICARE sends the pregnant woman a Healthy Start card and information about the services available to her under HSP, which include pregnancy-related prenatal and postpartum medical coverage up to 60 days after delivery.

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**Questions**

All claims processing for HSP is performed by UNICARE. If a Healthy Start provider has any questions about billing, refer the provider to the UNICARE customer service telephone number. Members that have claims-related issues or non-eligibility-related issues should also contact UNICARE customer service at 1-888-488-9161.

The Healthy Start Program staff is located at the Revere MassHealth Enrollment Center and can be reached at the original HSP telephone number: 1-800-531-2229. The HSP staff assists pregnant women in completing an MBR. The MBR is then sent for regular processing at the CPU.

If you have any questions about this memo, please have your MEC designee contact the Policy Hotline at 617-210-5331.

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